(c) if so, whether Government would refer the matter to the Pay Commission to make suitable recommendations in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) to (c) in the case of Central Government Pensioners the commuted portion of pension is restored after 15 years. These orders were issued in 1987. Pensioners in Government are compensated against price rise by way of payment of dearness relief on pension at regular intervals. The matter relating to State Government pensioners is the concern of respective State Governments. In some States, the commuted portion of pension for State pensioners is restored before the period of 15 years. There is, at present, no proposal to reduce the number of years for the restoration of commuted pension. The terms of reference of the Fifth Central Pay Commission 'include' to examine, with a view to having a proper pension structure for pensions, the existing pension structure including Death Cum Retirement Benefits and make recommendations relating thereto which may be desireable and feasible. This would *inter alia* cover commutation of pension, and the matters related to the same.

DECF's Assistance for Tailpond Dam Power House Projects in Andhra Pradesh

678. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has requested to recommend the projects relating to Tail Pond Dam Power House (down stream of Nagarjuna sagar) to the overseas economic cooperation fund (DECF) for assistance;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken for arranging external assistance for early implementation of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) to (c) Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board (APSEB) had requested Government of India to pose Nagarjuna Sagar Tail Pond Dam Power House hydroelectric scheme (2x25 MW) for external funding during the 9th Plan period. The project can be posed for external assistance only after the project receives clearance from Ministry of Environment & Forests and investment approval from Planning Commission.

Irregularities in distribution of Subsidised Motors Pumpsets in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa

679. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether several irregularities have been reported in the distribution of subsidised motor pumpsets, to the SCs and STs, under the Minor Irrigation Scheme, Comprehensive Rural Development Scheme, etc. in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa in 1995-96;

(b) if so, the norms followed by the district rural development authorities to identify the beneficiaries; and;

(c) the action proposed to be taken against erring officials who violated guidelines in this regard to helps bogus beneficiaries in those States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VERMA): (a) No such report of irregularities in the distribution of subsidised motor pumpsets to the SCs and STs under the Minor Irrigation Scheme, Comprehensive Rural Development Scheme etc. in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa in 1995-96 has been received by this Ministry.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Potential in Dhanbad

680. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC had carried out preliminary studies to evaluate Coal Bed Mehtane (CBM) potential in Parbatpur Mahal-Sitanala area of Dhanbad district in Bihar;

(b) whether these areas were leased to SAIL by Coal India Ltd., for captive mining;

(c) whether any pre-feasibility report was submitted to SAIL by ONGC with the proposal to form joint venture company to explore CBM from this field; and

(d) if so, the response of SAIL and the present status of CBM exploration in this area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, sir.

(b) The Screening committee functioning in the Ministry of Coal has identified certain coal mining blocks, including Sitanala, Mahal and Parbatpur in Jaria Coalfield for captive development by M/s. Steel Authority of India Ltd.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) No response has yet been received by ONGC from SAIL exploration for CBM has not Commenced.

Supply of Gas to Pipavav Power Project

681. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL:

SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 459 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th July, 1996 and state:

(a) whether Government have since taken any decision to supply gas to Pipavav Power Project of Gujarat; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and the alternative arrangement proposed by Government for the supply of gas to Pipavav Power Project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SH.T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) It has been decided to take the gas from mid-Tapti and South tapti to Hazira to meet existing commitments at Hazira and along the HBJ pipeline. The Government of Gujarat has been advised to base the Pipavav power project on alternative fuels.

गुजरात में विदेशी सहयोग से बिजली परियोजनाएं

682. श्री गोपाल सिंह जी० सोलंकी: **प्रधानमंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) गुजरात में अब तक विदेशी सहयोग से कितनी विद्युत परियोजनाएं स्थापित की गई हैं तथा इसका जिलावार ब्यौरा क्या है,

(ख) इन परियोजनाओं की मूल लागत, वार्षिक विद्युत उत्पादन क्षमता और किए गए कुल निवेश का ब्यौरा क्या है,

(ग) राज्य में विदेशी सहयोग से जिलावार स्थापित की जाने वाली कितनी गई परियोजनाएं सरकार के विचाराधीन हैं तथा वर्ष 1996-97 और 1997-98 के दौरान उनकी विद्युत उत्पादन का ब्यौरा क्या है, और